

THE  
**Mirror of the Stage;**  
OR,  
**NEW DRAMATIC CENSOR.**



" To hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature;  
To show virtue her own feature; scorn her own image;  
And the very age and body o' the times its form and pressure."

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**MEMOIR OF MR. ELLISTON.**

ROBERT WILLIAM ELLISTON was born in Orange Street, Bloomsbury, in the year 1772. His father being the youngest son of a farmer in Suffolk, his means only enabled him to give the subject of our memoir a common education, and but for his uncle, Dr. Elliston, the master of Sydney College, Cambridge, he would perhaps have only been qualified to measure tape, or scribble on parchment; but the Doctor having discovered in his nephew many early promises of talent, resolved to give him every advantage that a public education could afford him. He was accordingly, at nine years old, placed at St. Paul's School; here he remained until he was sixteen, and being intended by his uncle for the church, he would in all probability have been a member of Sydney, but being of a volatile disposition, it is not surprizing that he preferred the gay scenes of pleasure to the dry monotony of a college life.

Among the pleasures that engaged young Elliston's attention, the theatres formed the chief part, and from witnessing the efforts of others, his ambition was excited to perform himself. The resolution he had formed, was principally influenced by the applause he received on delivering an English oration at St. Paul's; and having joined a party of young men, who were performing at the Lyceum theatre, he made his first appearance on any stage as *Pierre*, in Otway's beautiful tragedy of "*Venice preserved*." Whether he displayed at that early age any indications of those mimic talents, which have since rendered him so eminent, we know not; but his performance of the "bold-faced villain" had the

effect of alienating him from his scholastic duties, and in consequence of some trifling disagreement with the head master of the school, he left St. Paul's, resolving to make the stage his profession.

In company, therefore, of a friend, he left London, and went to Bath, solicited an engagement of the manager, and with singular modesty, made choice of the trifling character of *Tressel*, in "*Richard the Third*," for his first appearance; in this part he exhibited great powers of elocution, and was rewarded by the applause of the audience. After a very short stay at Bath, our youthful actor joined Tate Wilkinson, at York, and went the circuit with that eccentric manager; here, however, he had no opportunity of appearing in any character of consequence, and having by this time experienced some of the troubles and vexations of an itinerant life, he took a disgust to the profession, and left the company very suddenly, resolving to return to London, to seek a reconciliation with his uncle.

To those who have once imbibed a passion for a theatrical life, it is a task of great difficulty wholly to refrain from its indulgence in some shape or other; our hero, therefore, found it in vain to strive against his inclination for the drama, and having written to his uncle, for the purpose of obtaining, through his influence, a recommendation to the London managers, he was, by means of a letter to Mr. John Kemble, introduced to that gentleman, who, after seeing him rehearse, promised him an engagement at the opening of the ensuing season, at Drury Lane; the love-sick *Romeo* was chosen for his *debut*, and he closely studied the character for a considerable time.

But finding at the commencement of the season the manager was unmindful of his promise, Mr. Elliston resolved once more to visit Bath. On an application to Mr. Dimond, he was immediately engaged, and appeared in the character of *Romeo*; his performance of this part fully and completely proved his capability of taking all the principal parts in the highest walk of the drama.

In consequence also of the occasional illness of some of the actors who were much older than himself on the stage, he was frequently called upon to play a character at a very short notice; he had thereby many opportunities of proving the versatility of his talents, by his performance of characters of a very opposite nature.

Our hero having made love so ably on the stage, it very naturally excited in him a desire to perform the same part *off*; the

accomplished and amiable Miss Rundall became the object of his ambition, and after a variety of schemes, he succeeded in carrying off the lady to London, where he was united to her in the holy bands of matrimony.

On the 24th of June, 1796, Mr. Elliston made his bow to a metropolitan audience, at the Haymarket theatre, in the characters of *Octavian* and *Vapour*. Of the former character, the powerful impression left on the dramatic world by Mr. John Kemble's performance of it, was not easily eradicated; it was therefore great praise to our *debutant*, that he left no reason for the audience to regret the secession of Mr. Kemble from the Haymarket company.

It was shortly previous to this time, that Colman's play of the "*Iron Chest*" had been produced and condemned at Drury Lane. A great deal of blame was attributed by the author to Mr. Kemble, for his performance of the part of *Sir Edward Mortimer*:—it was roundly asserted by Mr. Colman, in his preface to the published play, that the failure of the piece was entirely owing to Mr. Kemble; be this as it may, the success it afterwards met with proved that the author was in the right.

Notwithstanding, therefore, the failure of the play at Drury Lane, Mr. Colman resolved once more to produce it, and the part of *Mortimer* was given to Mr. Elliston; his performance of it was considered by the best judges as a masterpiece of its kind, and the piece had what may be considered a long run for a summer theatre.

From the Haymarket, our hero was engaged by Mr. Harris, of Covent Garden, to perform a certain number of nights at that theatre, (his engagement with the Bath manager not being then concluded) but owing to some disagreement with Mr. Harris, he again joined the Haymarket, and became the acting manager.

When Kemble and Mrs. Siddons left Drury Lane, Elliston was engaged to supply the place of the former, by taking the principal parts in tragedy; although infinitely inferior in some parts to his great predecessor, yet he contrived to keep the popularity he had gained, by his performance of *Octavian*, *Sheva*, &c.

At Drury Lane Mr. Elliston continued until the theatre was burnt down, and when the company opened the Lyceum, he left them, in consequence of some quarrel with the late Mr. Thomas Sheridan.

It was at this time that Mr. Elliston first assumed the managerial sceptre, by becoming proprietor of the Surrey theatre. Here,

having altered some of the best plays of Shakspeare, and some operas, in order to make them come within the meaning of his licence, he performed the principal parts, and very often appeared before the public, who rewarded his efforts to please them, by crowded houses.

On the re-building of Drury Lane, Mr. Elliston again formed part of that company, and played *Hamlet* the first night the theatre was opened. Of his performance of this character we shall refrain from saying any thing, as we are sure Mr. Elliston must be convinced, that with all his talent, *Hamlet* is a part completely out of his line.

Our readers are doubtless aware, that when the new theatre opened, the direction of its affairs was placed in the hands of a party of noblemen and gentlemen, who called themselves the sub-committee, at the head of whom were Lords Essex and Byron, Mr. Douglas Kinnaird and Mr. Peter Moore. The latter gentleman, however, was vested with all the authority of his coadjutors, and, if we may believe the reports of the daily prints at the time, was not so mild or "just in his great account" as he might have been. But as it is only our intention to speak of circumstances by their results, we shall refrain, (although contrary to the intention expressed in our last) from saying more than that, in our judgment, it was the greatest misfortune that ever afflicted poor Drury, when her affairs fell into the hands of such a sub-committee.

When the theatre was let out on lease, Mr. Elliston became the lessee, at a yearly rent of £10,200. The magnitude of the sum, and the greatness of the risk, required the exercise of the most extraordinary energy, and Mr. Elliston seemed to feel the arduous nature of the task he had undertaken; but unhappily, jealousies, and a variety of other circumstances, crept in, and Mr. Elliston had the mortification to find that his best performers were seceding from his company. We know not to whom the blame was attributable, but the manager quickly discovered, by the deficiency in his treasury, that he was losing very fast the patronage of the public, and although he sought to woo them back again by the splendour of a "*Coronation*" pageant, yet the season was most disastrous.

The experience of the past proved a lesson to Mr. Elliston not very easy to be forgotten, and he resolved to make amends to his patrons, by his future exertions to deserve their approbation; in this he has happily succeeded, and if an elegant and splendid

theatre, and a most effective company, can prove deserving of support and patronage, we are sure the public will not be tardy in amply rewarding Mr. Elliston for his anxiety to contribute to their amusement.

We have heard very many accounts of what has been termed the *tyranny* of Mr. Elliston in his managerial capacity, but our experience of theatrical matters has taught us to know the anxieties and difficulties attending on the duty of a manager, to pay much attention to what envy and prejudice would make appear monstrous.

Having noticed thus briefly the merit of Mr. Elliston as a manager, we shall, in conclusion, offer a few observations as to our opinion of him as an actor. That he is unquestionably the first comedian of the day, none we are sure will attempt to deny; unlike some other performers, there is a manner about him, that the memory likes to dwell on with unfeigned pleasure; for who that has witnessed his performance of the *Duke Aranza*, in the "*Honey Moon*," can ever forget his masterly delineation of that excellent character?—look also at his *Doricourt*, *Lord Townly*, *Belcour*, *Harry Dornton*, *Rocer*, and "last, though not least," *Mercutio*; together with a long list of other admirable characters: can the most sceptical deny that his performance of them is the height of excellence, displaying at once the finished manners of the gentleman, and the genius of the actor.

For our own parts, if we have any judgment of mimic talent, we hesitate not to say, that Mr. Elliston's performance of the character of *Ranger*, in the "*Suspicious Husband*," is the very triumph of the dramatic art; for we are sure, and we stake our experience to the fact, that there never was character so completely supported on the stage, to equal his personation of the accomplished rake.

In private life, Mr. Elliston carries with him that elasticity of spirit, and gentlemanly demeanour, that distinguish him on the stage; and he is also the adored father of several lovely and accomplished daughters. Mr. E. has been unhappily a widower for some time.

Of his talents as a writer, some idea may be formed by the perusal of a manly and excellently written letter, to the managers of the patent theatres, at the time he was proprietor of the Surrey, in consequence of their attempt to curtail the privileges of the minor theatres. We have heard, however, that Mr. Elliston, since he has been lessee of Drury Lane, has suppressed this letter, as

he did not think it quite *harmonized* with his conduct towards the proprietors of the Coburg theatre: we certainly do think, (much as we approve of Mr. Elliston as a manager and an actor) that the proceeding he took against the minor theatres, came with a very ill grace from one who had exerted his pen to defend that conduct, which at a later period he found inimical to his interest. But as we presume the feelings of Mr. Elliston, as manager of the Surrey, and as lessee of Drury Lane, are widely different, we shall conclude with our sincere wish for the prosperity of the establishment placed in his hands. H.

### SHAKSPEARE'S FEMALE CHARACTERS.

#### No. II.—LADY MACBETH.

"None are all evil. Clinging round her heart,  
One softer feeling would not yet depart:  
Which only proved, all other virtues gone,  
Not guilt itself could quench this loveliest one."

.....  
"I'll try the firmness of a female hand.  
If errs my feeble arm, the morning cloud  
Will hover o'er thy scaffold and my shroud."

.....  
....."Upon her brow, unknown, forgot,  
Her hurrying hand had left—'twas but a spot—  
"Oh! slight but certain pledge of crime!—'tis blood."

"The Corsair."

IT is the task of a common mind to imitate others, and follow in the track first opened by an inventive genius, and since trodden by its attendant satellites—But the mind of Shakspeare was of no common order.—The flight of his imagination could no more be bounded by the inglorious limits in which others ranged, than the towering wing of the eagle can be confined to flutter within the narrow circuit of the insect. To represent the character of an ambitious man, sacrificing every affection that dwelt within his heart, and every tie that bound him to his country and his friends, staining himself with the indelible guilt of murder, that should render his name detested by his contemporaries, and his memory odious to posterity, and all for a little rule, or perhaps only the semblance of rule, but transient and fleeting, whichever it might be, all this was done every day, and could be drawn by any man. But Shakspeare grasped a pencil exclusively his own. His fancy was one of the brightest and rarest that ever visited the earth, and when it was brought down to content itself with these images of every day's experience, it illuminated them with a splendour so glorious, that its



beams will visit the latest generation, who will confess that his portraits were descriptive not of one age of men, but of human nature in general, here recognizing at once the source of their interest and the spring of their immortality. On this occasion however, he took a novel path; and drew not man in the adventurous path of dangerous ambition, but *woman*. She, to whose tenderness we are indebted for our very existence, and all the little alleviations that smooth our life, and connect us with her in bonds of affection strong as death—she, formed for all the witchery of love, whose arms should be attractive smiles, or more attractive tears—she,

“Who once the semblance of a scar

Appall’d, an owl’s larum chill’d,”

now looks fearlessly on her sleeping guest, and plunges her dagger in his bosom. Such a picture, while it was designed by no vulgar hand, required also the pencil of a master to fill up its outline—That pencil was present, and its production is the character of *LADY MACBETH*.

The character here drawn is terrifically grand. Its principal feature is a towering ambition, that recognizes no obstacles, and regards no consequences—It has taken possession of her whole soul, and every other thought must mingle with it, and yield to it. It is the same spirit through the whole tragedy, urging Macbeth to the deed, remonstrating on his hesitation, and finishing his imperfect slaughter—But to hear of the high prediction which agitated him, is to resolve on its fulfilment. She will “pour her spirits in his ear,” lest he should shrink from the unwelcome but necessary office. And when she hears of the king’s intended visit to her castle, the fire of her aspiring soul can scarcely be contained. She is aware of the terrible nature of the act she meditates, yet does not falter. She calls on heaven to shroud itself, in the mantle of its thickest darkness, lest even her weapon should refuse to wound the unoffending Duncan, and Heaven itself cry “hold” at the inhuman act. All this does not appal a mind so fixed on the imperial diadem; and the moment she beholds her lord, she greets him with the “all-hail hereafter,” counselling him to let his face be no index of his mind—

“Look like the innocent flower,

But be the serpent under it.”

But then she viewed the glorious end that was to crown her labours, and with the “sovereign sway and masterdom” in view, what will not woman do: what will not woman dare? Prudent, yet despicable, is her conduct before the King. When, too, Macbeth, influenced by unanswerable arguments, has resolved to

"proceed no further in this business," her chiding is quite in character: she is aware he can ill brook the accusation of cowardice, and therefore she spiritedly rouses his slumbering courage; she would shame him, representing, that had *she* so bound herself, she would have executed a far more deadly act; she would have ruthlessly destroyed the child, who hung upon her in plaintive innocence for nourishment, and while it smiled in gratitude on the dearest friend it recognized on earth, have raised an infanticidal arm against her offspring.

Having prevailed on him, she contrives the plan, and knowing too well his irresolute nature, undertakes a part of it herself, to intoxicate the servants. In the awful scene which follows the commission of the murder, she never swerves from her purpose: while the visitings of conscience are heavy upon her lord, her cheek blanches not, her hand, all stained with blood, is firm: roused by the dangerous cowardice of her husband, she exclaims

"Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers. The sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures."

The fire of desperate ambition burnt higher every moment, till her courage could look death in the face, and all human pity lie scorched up.

Of this foul deed she is the very soul; but for whom, Macbeth had never attempted it, or, attempting, been defeated. Perhaps the only time when we are warranted in supposing that, in the presence of strangers, her unfeminine self-possession was disturbed, is when she faints at her husband's glowing representation of the dreadful scene, which he adduced in excuse for murdering the grooms. Her unnatural daring had ceased with the occasion which excited it.

There is indeed but one redeeming quality that still points out the woman, and tells us that she is not all unearthly; yet it does but render the surrounding darkness of her character more gloomy than before in contrast. In the hour of blood, when her husband is committing the foul murder of his confiding guest, she exclaims

"Had he not resembled

My father as he slept, I had done it."

There is something so repulsive, so at variance with all our notions of the tenderness of the female sex, in the idea of woman's committing a deed on which all nature frowns, and which the very beasts would almost scorn, that we are relieved to find she revolted from the thought. This is the only link that connects her with all the merciful ties of humanity; this sole remaining feeling



makes her still one of us; but for this we might think her a demon, we could hardly believe her a woman.

But wickedness is always followed by remorse. In the tyrant's gaudy court, pomp is splendour to every eye, and can deceive every heart, but his own. We have this feature presented in all its terrors: not whispering of a day of vengeance in faint and few accents, but proclaiming it in a voice like thunder to the wretched victim, whose "undying thought" is of her crime committed. It pursues her even in the hour of slumber:

" Her eyes but close,  
To look within."

Sleep, "that knits up the ravelled sleave of care," brought no repose to her. It was but a continuance of maddening thought, which then could not be governed by her prudence—Oh! the troubled conscience is never at rest. How wretched to be reduced to the miserable consolation of "what is done cannot be undone!" "Still, still there's a spot," a stain which water refuses to efface, and time is unable to destroy—Ay, and a deeper stain rested upon her heart. Those hands will ne'er be clean; and Oh! that heart will never know the repose of purity and innocence again. Innocence spread her unsullied wings, and flew away, when she changed the distaff for the dagger, and met her king with smiles on her countenance and treachery in her heart, with hypocritical rejoicing and a secret blow. Mercy and peace, and all the train of virtues, forsook her polluted breast, and it became the desolated abode of cruelty and violence. Remorse built his tabernacle there, and fear lurked in its recesses, till madness seemed a blessing long denied. But it came at last, only to render deeper and less repressed the thought of that homicidal hour, which threw its guilty shade over all her visions; and when at length the struggle had out-tired her mortal frame, death, her latest relief, laid his cold hand upon her, and she sunk into her untimely tomb.

The moral of this character must not be overlooked. It shews us wickedness defeated when it was most triumphant, and honors gained in a manner that embittered their enjoyment, making them a perpetual memento of crime. Who would barter innocence for such hollow joys? It is not he whose shrieks strike loudest on the ear from his dark cell, whose actions are most frantic and his cries most piercing, that is most unhappy: but he is the most wretched being that earth can hold or humanity recognize, in whose heart there are mingled a continual recurrence to a guilty action, and a perpetual fear of its detection; who trembles every moment

lest some inexpiable act should finally be known, and knows that its publicity would involve all that is most dreaded. It is to such a being, that a modern poet, in the wildness of his fancy, has imagined some ruthless demon, the arbiter of his fate, to exclaim, in accents that are for ever to be present to his mind—

"I call upon thee, and compel  
Thyself to be thy proper hell.  
Lo! the spell now works around thee,  
And the clankless chain hath bound thee.  
O'er thy heart and brain together,  
Hath the word been passed. Now wither."

PHILO-TRAGICUS

Errata in No. VI. Page 84, l. 3, after "*reflection in*" insert "*those hours of solitude, when fancy adds to them charms of*" &c.—p. 86, l. 4, after "*nor*" read "*have.*"

## Theatrical Diary.

### DRURY LANE.

October 18. Address, School for Scandal, Poor Soldier.—19th. Address, Road to Ruin, Agreeable Surprise.—21st. Pizarro, Giovanni in London.—22nd. Road to Ruin, Paul and Virginia.—23rd. Hamlet, Monsieur Tonson.—24th. Wild Oats, Agreeable Surprise.—25th. Pizarro, Giovanni in London.—26th. Suspicious Husband, Paul and Virginia.—28th. Pizarro, Giovanni in London.—29th. Road to Ruin, What Next.—30th. Macbeth, Past Ten o'clock.—31st. Wild Oats, Venetian Nuptials, Rendezvous.

"*Wild Oats.*"—We do not remember Mr. Elliston to have been in better spirits, or to have acted with more vivacity, than on the present evening; his *Rover* was particularly fine.—Knight, as *Sim*, was received with the most flattering applause; it being his first appearance since a serious indisposition. Terry played *John Dory*, and a better representative is not on the stage. *Ephraim Smooth*, (first time) by Harley, was but a very flimsy "flat and unprofitable" piece of acting—the inimitable quiet drollery that Munden infuses throughout the character was lost, nor could Harley supply the least humour to be productive of effect; he should refrain from stepping out of his line. The other characters were generally as before—Mrs. West's *Lady Amaranth* is remarkably chaste and pretty. Mrs. H. Hughes, as *Cowslip* in the "*Agreeable Surprise*," strengthens our opinion of her merits; she is a pleasing actress and deserves attention. Harley is not the best *Lingo* we have, he was nevertheless heartily amusing.

The comedy of the "*Suspicious Husband*" was represented to a fashionable audience, the house in fact was immensely crowded. Elliston's *Ranger* was replete with ease, humour and elegance. Mrs. Davison's first appearance this season, as *Clarinda*, was greeted with unanimous applause. Mrs. W. West, as *Jacintha*,

and Mrs. Orger, as *Mrs. Strickland*, were both pleasing. Cooper's *Frankly* is a hard and ineffective portrait of the true gentleman. Penley is not the *Jack Meggot* we are pleased with, Harley would have been much superior. Mr. Pope's physical qualities, by age and long service, are much reduced, yet his personation of *Strickland* was very respectable. A Mr. Mercer made his *debut*, as *Bellamy*: we cannot speak as to the talent he may possess, from the specimen of this evening we are not altogether prepossessed in his favor; we have Messrs. Cooper, Penley, Barnard, to walk through the line of genteel comedy, and surely there is no need of any additional burden. Were Mr. Elliston to disencumber the pay list of several useless persons, and retain for a continuance such actors of talent, who are merely hired for a few nights, in order to swell the general appearance of the *hand-bills*, it would be greatly to his credit and advantage; embodied with the talent now in his possession, what a charming season might he not, and the public likewise, enjoy. At Drury Lane they might witness tragedy, comedy and opera, in perfection; they might have Young and Kean one night, Dowton, Munden, Terry, Liston, &c. the next, Braham and Miss Stephens to follow, and so on, each night a complete variation, and in all a real and rich delight. Mr. Elliston may then with unquestionable safety challenge the world for competition; he then may boast of a combination of the utmost dramatic excellence; such an opportunity is in his power, let him not forget its ultimate and certain success; in carelessness and folly.

#### COVENT GARDEN.

October 18th. Fontainebleau, Blind Boy.—19th. A Day after the Wedding, Beggar's Opera, Ali Pacha.—21st. Sleep Walker, Beggar's Opera, Ali Pacha.—22nd. Wonder, Ali Pacha.—23rd. Twelfth Night, Ali Pacha.—24th. Douglas, Poor Soldier, Ali Pacha.—25th. Way to Keep Him, Ali Pacha.—26th. Douglas, Poor Soldier, Ali Pacha.—28th. Beggar's Opera, Irish Tutor; or, New Lights, Ali Pacha.—29th. Wonder, Irish Tutor, Ali Pacha.—30th. Clandestine Marriage, Irish Tutor, Ali Pacha.—31st. Jealous Wife, Irish Tutor, Ali Pacha.

"*Douglas*," "*Poor Soldier*," &c. Really, Mr. C. Kemble, the style of management hitherto adopted, cannot be very agreeable to the interests and welfare of a property so extensive as Covent Garden theatre: we cannot but feel regret at the sight of such beggarly houses: this evening afforded a most pitiable instance indeed, and how can it be expected otherwise, when an entertain-

ment is offered of so poor a description. "*Douglas*," of all tragedies the most insipid, spiritless and unbearable; we remember to have been sickened at it even in our boyhood: as a christmas repast for the rising generation it may have its due, but no oftener will it bear recognition. However, this is an extra occasion: a *young gentleman*, and be it understood, one of the Kemble family, was desirous of amusing his friends on the termination of his scholastic period, and *Young Norval* of course, must be the identical character. To strengthen the cast, Mrs. Clifford, from the Haymarket theatre, plays *Lady Randolph*; Yates, *Glenalvon*—why not Abbott or Horrebrow!!—Bartley, *Old Norval*, a very *aldermanly* sort of personage by the bye; and thus is formed the principal feature of the performance. With these *recommendations*, and notwithstanding all our punishments, we were resolved to summon fortitude and see it out, and so we did: whatever may be the fatigue attendant upon the labours of the inhabitants of *Brixton and such resorts*, it could not surpass that we felt during the occupation of our engagement. We did hear, that an obscure journal or two of the following day took some pains to enumerate the young actor's excellent qualities— it must have required more than ordinary pains! And then the play-bills spoke largely upon the success of Mr. Mason, (the young gentleman) This may do for some folks, but as we are guided by our own opinion, and no trifling experience in theatrical matters, we care not from whom we may differ; nor do we fear hazarding investigation, or proving by sound argument the accuracy of our reports.

A contemporary journal observes, that the young gentleman "has played in the country, but he does not appear to be much accustomed to the stage:" he certainly is not *accustomed*, we doubt if ever he will, and cannot help feeling a sorrow that he did not continue in the *country* much longer, for there is a kind of apprehension comes over us, of our having much to endure from *him*. Surely the "committee of management," or whoever may controul the arrangements of this theatre, will not be so extravagant, for the sake of gratifying the small circle of this young gentleman's friends, as to involve a national establishment in disgrace and ruin. We are the last persons to discourage the "dawning of talent," but we do not wish to be persecuted until the said "dawning" be discovered. Besides, there is another sphere in which that "talent" may be more appreciated:—we would recommend him, if the stage is marked out as his profession, to pursue his studies for some few years in a provincial circuit;

he there may become *accustomed* to observe, if he has not ability even to *take* the leading business. Persons who are in the habit of paying their seven shillings admission to a patent theatre, must have something worth their money; they do not expect to find a patent theatre converted into a nursery for the "dawning of talent: they *expect*, and justly too, to meet with perfection, and while it is not so; the welfare of such a theatre is materially at stake.

After the tragedy, the musical farce of the "*Poor Soldier*" introduced Mr. Keeley, of minor theatre notoriety, (as *Darby*) and setting aside the hackneyed style of such performers, and looking only to Mr. Keeley's present attempt, it certainly was far above *mediocre*; there was an occasional flash of originality in his manner, which amused the audience, and gained him repeated applause.

The chasm which the departure of Miss Stephens had created in the operatic strength of this theatre, is somewhat removed by the engagement of Miss Paton, whose announcement as *Polly*, in the "*Beggar's Opera*," was productive of an excellent house: (the first this season.) The merits of Miss Paton in this character, were submitted to our readers in a previous report of the Haymarket theatre, and the essay upon these boards was if possible more successful, it was marked by the most cheering congratulations. Mr. Pearman was the *Macheath*, and so far as regards the acting and business of the character, we were agreeably surprised to find it the best, decidedly the best of the present day. Braham, Charles Horn, Hunt, Duruset, and one or two other Macheaths of late, were much inferior to Mr. Pearman. We could wish to speak equally commendatory of his singing, but there is a deficiency in the upper tone of his voice that is somewhat afflicting; he should refrain touching upon it, and he is then infinitely the best singer we have, after Braham.—"*How happy could I be with either*," and "*When the heart of a man*," were his most successful efforts. Blanchard's *Peachum*, and Bartley's *Lockit*, were each humorous. Meadows is not a good *Filch*. Taylor, in *Mat o' the Mint*, seemed perfectly happy. The opera was given out for repetition amidst the greatest applause.

A new melodrama, from the French, called "*Ali Pacha*," was produced for the first time, and with the aid of some beautifully painted scenery, agreeable and well arranged music, it met with a tolerable share of approbation. The following is a sketch of the plot.

*Ali Pacha*, (W. Farren) whose inveterate cruelty and heavy persecutions towards the inhabitants of Yanina, had rendered him their deadliest foe, being threatened by the Turkish forces, under the command of *Ismael*, (Mears) retires to his fortress, retaining *Ibrahim*, the son of Ismael, as his prisoner. *Zenocles*, a Souliot chief, (T. P. Cooke) eager to avenge his wrongs, and those of his country, enters, in the disguise of Ismael's ambassador, the citadel of Ali: he meets with *Talathon*, (Chapman) who he urges to join him in the rescue of their rights, and proposes the destruction of Ali. *Helena*, (Miss Foote) protected by Ali, and unknown as the sister of Zenocles, hears the plot, and communicates it to Ali, and *Selim*, his grandson and her lover, (Abbot) The Pacha commands the instant death of Ibrahim, and Zenocles, with Talathon, are to meet the same award. By a scroll in the possession of Ali, the consanguinity of Helena and Zenocles is discovered; another account informs Ali that Selim is not his relative, but the son of a Macedonian chief. This combined information, and the attack of Ismael's troop, maddens him, and he dictates to Selim, that in the event of the enemy's success, to fire the magazine, and in one conflagration destroy both friends and foes. Selim assents, but previously gives Zenocles and Helena liberty. Ismael is victorious: Ali gives the signal to Selim, already preparing the train: the citadel is about to be undermined, when *Hassan*, (Farley) impedes the attempt, intimating to Selim of his real birth, and they both escape the ruin. Ali, fearing Selim's negligence, hurries to the vault or powder magazine, and blows up the citadel. The Turks are seen vanquished, and Zenocles amid the ruins erects the Grecian banner, and in smoke and red fire the curtain falls.

The merits of this production are superior to the general description of such pieces: there is no opportunity for dullness, each scene opens with interest, and the business is kept up with activity. Farren, as *Ali*, was unusually good; there is no actor, after Young, Kean, and Macready, that could have made so much of the relentless yet withered tyrant. T. P. Cooke, as *Zenocles*, played with considerable energy; the character is quite in his own line. Farley's *Hassan* was comic, though occasionally too boisterous. Miss Foote looked interesting, and the whole of the actors contributed their earnest support. It was given out for Monday without the least disapprobation.

#### SURREY.

Our second visit to this theatre has produced no alteration in our opinion of the merit of this melodrame, (*"The Invulnerable:"*) its attraction consists only in the splendid scenery, the evolutions of the horses, and (with some exception) the goodness of the acting.

Of the comic piece called the *"Barber of Bagdad,"* it would be useless to enter into any description of the plot, our readers have doubtless read all the tales in the *"Arabian Nights,"* and we therefore need only say, this piece is founded on one of them. The situations are some of them ludicrous, but the dialogue very



common place, and the jokes vulgar; the actors however compensated by their performance, for the absence of all wit or humour in the dialogue. Davidge, as the *Barber*, was excellent, and sang the comic song of "*Love's like a concert of music*," with great spirit. Blanchard, Lawrence, Kirby, and Misses Jonas and Bence, played well.

We are at all times desirous of awarding our commendation to the laudable zeal displayed by Mr. Burroughs, in varying the amusements at this theatre, but we most earnestly recommend that gentleman not to suffer such performances as that of a person standing on his head on the point of a spear: on the evening we were present, whether from some omission or the bungling manner of the actor we know not, but our feelings were painfully excited by witnessing his fall from a height of at least ten feet: these performances are exceedingly wrong: for they hold out a temptation to actors to risk breaking of a limb, in order to gain the applause of the audience at the expence of their feelings: we say for heaven's sake "avoid it altogether."

#### DAVIS'S AMPHITHEATRE.

A new piece entitled "*Fillebrande; or the Female Bandit*," from the pen of Mr. Charles Dibdin, was produced here last Monday, and met with a very favorable reception: we shall take an opportunity of giving a critique in our next. The company is very good, and the house during the last week has been well attended.

#### WEST LONDON.

The burletta of "*The Female Impostors*," is admirably calculated for the display of the talent of this theatre. Mr. Brunton's *Don Octavio*, and Hooper's *Don Phillip*, are both well performed. Mr. Lane, who we have lately observed to possess some good qualities as a comic actor, played *Trapanti* with much humour. The *Hyppolita* of Miss Brunton is perfectly in her style of rich and genuine acting. Miss Norton is ever respectable.

"*Zutulbe*" a melodrame from the "*Forty Thieves*" merits considerable praise. The cast of the "*Soldier's Daughter*," with Miss Brunton as the *Widow Cheerly*, Loveday's *Governor Heartall*, Brunton's *Frank*, Hooper, as *Captain Woodley*, and Lane, as *Timothy Quaint*, is a performance that demands every encouragement worthy the highest establishment.

"*Bears not Beasts*" introduced Mr. H. Beverly, as *Puddefut*: his entrance was noticed by repeated and continued applause, his eccentricity throughout created perpetual shouts of laughter. There is an original and happy humour about Mr. H. Beverly that is remarkably valuable, we have had frequent opportunity of witnessing its effect; by care and attention he may ultimately become as great a favorite on the patent stage as we have; he is the only actor that approaches to the dry *forte* and drollery of Liston, and we scruple not to affirm, that one season's personation of his line would raise him nearly to a par with Liston: it is not the Coburg or any minor theatre that can call forth the originality nature gave him; carelessness of habit diminishes much, but let him be seen for instance at the Haymarket, in *Neatdy Bray*, *Lubin Log*, *Lord Grizzle*, *Baillie Nicol Jarvie*, and several others that we could point out, and the opinion of the public we are certain would fully coincide with our own.

We think the change of performances twice a week at this theatre, is more beneficial than otherwise.

#### OLYMPIC.

This theatre opened on Monday evening, 28th, with a very effective company, under the management of Mr. Egerton, of Covent Garden. The house has been newly embellished and has a very light and pleasing appearance. The performances were "*Joan of Arc*," and "*Tom and Jerry*." Mrs. Egerton, in the former piece, played the character of *Joan* with great energy, judgment and effect. We have only room to express our wishes for the success of Mr. E. in his new undertaking.

#### THE KALIEDOSCOPE.

The following curious circumstance took place at the Lyceum theatre some time ago. During the performances, the Galleries thought proper to call for their favorite song of "*The Sprig of Shillelagh*," though not announced in the bills. Mr. Johnstone, however, came forward with his usual alacrity and good humour to comply with the wishes of the house: accordingly the music played; but when Mr. Johnstone was to have begun, he stood silent and apparently confused. Again the music played the symphony, but the same silence and confusion took place in rather an increased degree. A third time the music played the symphony, but to no purpose. At last Mr. Johnstone came forward, and thus addressed the house: "*Ladies and gentlemen, I assure you that I have sung this song so often that I forget the first line.*" A universal roar of laughter ensued, and about two hundred voices began at once to prompt the actor, who immediately sung it with the usual applause.

After the battle of Culloden, in the year 1745, a reward of thirty thousand pounds was offered to any one who should discover or deliver up the young Pretender. He had taken refuge with the Kennedies, two common thieves, who protected him with the greatest fidelity; who robbed for his support, and often went in disguise to Inverness to purchase provisions for him. A considerable time afterwards one of these men, who had resisted the temptation of thirty thousand pounds from a regard to his honor, was hanged for stealing a cow of the value of thirty shillings.





MR. YOUNG AS ROLLA.  
*in Pizarro.*